PAPERBOUND BOOKS--BOON OR BANE?

Donald E. Strout, Associate Professor
University of Illinois Library School

The scene is a publishers' party--and the central figures a man in a tweedy sports coat, puffing at a pipe, and a pleasantly plump matron, balancing a glass in her hand. "Tell me," she gushes brightly, "Are you paper-back or hard-cover?"--Thus the New Yorker, with customary urbanity, recently paid its respects to an aspect of the contemporary publishing scene that to some is a revolution and to others merely revolting.

All of this business of publishing paperbacks started quite a while back and is not, one must hasten to point out, exclusively American, nor indeed, exclusively 20th century. Paperbacks have doubtless existed, in one form or another, for 2000 years or so. But for our purposes, a point of well-documented origin seems to be the famed Tauchnitz Edition series of British and American authors, started in Leipzig in 1841 by Bernhard (later Baron) Tauchnitz, and running ere its final days into something over 5,000 titles. This, and Philip Reclam's Universal Bibliothek, started in 1867 and running to 6,000 titles (with sales of over 30,000,000) in fifty years, are the most famous of the foreign series in paper covers prior to the 20th century. Interestingly enough, at almost the same time Tauchnitz was beginning his highly successful venture on the Continent, we witness (in 1831) the start of what is considered to be the first paperback series in America--The Library of Useful Knowledge, published by the Boston Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge.

The last four decades of the 19th century saw much activity in paperback publishing in this country. Perhaps we may permit ourselves the luxury of a moment's digression here to dwell upon one Mr. Erastus Beadle and his publishing ventures, as recounted with such gentle irony in J.D. Hart's The Popular Book:

> Erastus Beadle had a shrewd sense of popular taste... but he did best of all when in the mid-summer of 1860 he issued Malaeska, or The Indian Wife of the White Hunter, the first dime novel. . . . Beadle knew he had a good thing in the pocket-size paperbound novelette whose 120 pages combined conventional moral attitudes, stereotyped heroism and villainy, and the romance of the frontier in a simply told and fast-paced story that could be afforded by any man with a dime to spare. [1]

And who has not heard of the adventures of that stalwart exemplar of American virtue, Horatio Alger, thanks to the energy, imagination and efforts of the publishing house of Street & Smith--a firm with some 39 series of paperbacks to its credit since its inception in 1855?

But whether their hero was a "rags to riches" lad or a homespun hero of the western wilderness (a la the alliterative tendencies of Mr. Beadle and his competitors), or some courtier or gallant in a pirated French novel, or a character adorning the pages of a New York Tribune "extra," the whole paperback enterprise boomed in the post-Civil War years. In 1885, as Kurt Enoch points out in his excellent article in Library Quarterly for July 1954, [2] almost one-third of the titles published for the year were in paper covers (1,500 out of 4,500) as compared with roughly one-twelfth today (1,000 out of 12,000). But with the waning years of the century, production dwindled, and this area of publishing became, if not dead, at least dormant.

And so we arrive at the 20th century. Behind us are the names of Tauchnitz, Reclam, Beadle and Street & Smith. But not entirely behind us--the house of Reclam, with its little red paperbound volumes of philosophy and classics of literature, casts a long shadow--all the way into the American West--and to a figure heretofore inexplicably overlooked (or ignored) by writers on the history of the paperback, Emmanuel Haldemann-Julius of Girard, Kansas, and his Little Blue Books, books that sold 150,000,000 copies of 1,500 titles in their heyday, ranging from sex and socialism to Shakespeare and Schopenhauer, and including handbooks, "how-to" books and general hokum. His star-studded stable of authors included great literary figures of the past and present and his books won the approval of leading lights of

the '20's, who presumably subscribed to his philosophy of making good reading "as easily available and as cheap as chewing gum." (Incidentally, if the vogue and format set by the Haldemann-Julius books had caught on, we might today be speaking of vest-pocket rather than pocket books.)

As the long shadow of Reclam fell westward to Kansas to provide the impetus for the Little Blue Books series, so also Tauchnitz, through its successor, the Albatross Modern Continental Library, provided the inspiration for the highly-esteemed Penguin series, started in England in 1935 and widely acknowledged as the first of the modern paperbacks. In fact, Penguin's colophon and general format bear mute testimony to the Albatross influence. The Tauchnitz-Albatross-Penguin tradition, moreover, reached these American shores in the persons of Kurt Enoch and Victor Weybright, who subsequently left the American offices of Penguin to form New American Library, and Ian Ballantine, who also forsook Penguin to start Ballantine Books--two giants in American paperback publishing.

But Penguin deserves a further word. Now twenty-one years old and publishing both in Great Britain and the U.S.A., it boasts in its several series--Penguins, Pelicans, Puffins, et al.--1,000 titles, adds some 250 each year (and withdraws some, as well) and sells some 10,000,000 copies annually on subjects ranging from fiction and crime all the way to history, philosophy, religion and art.

This sketch of the backgrounds of paperback publishing concludes, appropriately enough, with the modern American scene. The closing years of the Depression saw the appearance of the first paperback publisher in the present tradition of mass production and mass distribution--Pocket Books, founded by Robert F. de Graff in 1939. Then came Avon in 1941; Bantam was started in 1946; New American Library in 1948--and paperbacks were on their way. (The widespread use of the term "pocket book" to denote any paperbound book generally betokens what was at one time the unique position of Pocket Books Inc. in this regard. This has doubtless not been an occasion for sorrow on the part of that firm.) The most recent significant development has been the emergence of the so-called "quality" paperbacks in the '50's, of which we shall hear more later.

"Leaps and bounds" is the only way to describe what has taken place in paperback publishing in the last decade. Over

5,000 separate titles were listed as "in print" last spring and the Fall 1956 issue of Paperbound Books in Print contains 5,400 titles from 83 different series, 21 of them new to this edition.

Sales of paperbakcs have reached astronomical proportions, if we can believe the widely quoted figures. However, it should be noted that statistics from the publishing world are, as anyone who has worked in this field will attest, notoriously hard to come by. Publishers themselves are quoted as saying that sales and distribution figures generally are not available outside the trade and, indeed, are not likely to be.

In 1954, the latest year for which any kind of official figures are in print, the two chief sources of information on this point--the American Book Publishers' Council and the U.S. Census Bureau--show considerable divergence in the figures reported for the one category for which comparable figures are provided--that of "adult general" books. The ABPC's figure for paperbacks sold in this category in 1954 is about 190,000,000;[3] the U.S. Census figure about 128,000,000.[4] Sales of paperbacks for 1954 in the categories of adult, juvenile, technical, scientific and professional, based on Census Bureau figures, totalled 265,000,000. As for 1955, several "general estimates" from the trade itself place sales rather broadly between 200,000,000 and 300,000,000 copies. As for 1956, one bookstore alone (Kroch's and Brentano's) in Chicago expects to sell $200,000 worth of paperbacks.

A segment of an industry which sells a quarter of a billion copies annually merits something more than passing consideration--and, I should hasten to add, gets it--all the way from bouquets to brickbats. This enterprise has been variously hailed inside and outside the trade as an "enfant terrible," a "Wunderkind," "the 20th century equivalent of the printing press of the 15th century," "the paperback revolution," and "the cultural revolution"--which last phrase, incidentally, caused no less a person than Bernard De Voto now and then (as in Harper's for October 1954) to rise up from his Easy Chair and tootle a loud and furious blast on his terrible trumpet against Messrs. Kurt Enoch et al.

And this phenomenon, or revolution, or whatever it is, has not gone unnoticed abroad. "Perhaps," observed D. W. Brogan in the Manchester Guardian, "in the paperback is the new American Lyceum, the substitute for lecture halls

where, a century ago, Emerson and Bronson Alcott brought the transcendentalist enlightenment to the prairies."[5]

Several isolated aspects of paperbacks have from time to time been the subject of prolonged and heated controversy--notably the contents and the covers. One source has described the paperback as "a book with a girl on the jacket but no jacket on the girl." Gilbert Highet, in praising the Penguin series, once observed, "Not one of the Penguin Books has a cover which emphasizes the fact that human beings are mammals. On the contrary, they treat us as intellectuals." Bennett Cerf, referring to the clean-up and cutback in paperbound publishing of a few years back, wrote, "With the weaker elements eliminated and the pornographic corps torsoed [italics the author's] into the ash heap, the survivors can prosper mightily." This is not to say that all the murder and mayhem, sex, sadism, and seduction masquerading occasionally under the thin guise of history or sociology have fled the paperback field in defeat. They most certainly have not. The flamboyant floozie, the blooming, buxom blonde, the historical (and often hysterical) heroine, whose morals are slipshod and whose apparel slipshed, the drunkard, the dope peddler, and numerous other oddballs and assorted unlovable characters are still here. One fact which seems to have been overlooked in this regard is that the appearance of these estimable figures in hardbound form antedates considerably their appearance in softer (i.e., paper) covers. To write off the whole field of paperback publishing as an unworthy venture, as some are prone to do, on the grounds that it publishes trash, is nonsense. After all, the hardbound field, as I recall, publishes both Spillane and Shakespeare. Trash continues, of course, in both hardbounds and paperbounds. But what with Congressional investigations, a one-time glutted market, a self-imposed clean-up by the publishers themselves, and one thing and another, today's paperbacks exhibit covers that are somewhat less lewd, lascivious and lurid than a few years back, and the contents as well (at least in many of the more substantial series) show a turn for the better, though no less a firm than Penguin still confesses that the "spine" of all its paperback publishing continues to be fiction--and crime.

This tendency towards publishing the significant, serious, worth-while book of lasting value in an inexpensive, easily-obtainable, mass-distributed format culminated with the

appearance of the "quality" paperback on the publishing scene in the early 1950's. Doubleday's Anchor Books in 1953 (with titles such as Edmund Wilson's To the Finland Station and others of like calibre) was joined by Knopf's Vintage Books, Harcourt Brace's Harvest Books, Van Nostrand's Anvil Books, Viking's Paperbound Portables, and others. (Some publishers, I am happy to add, have even employed a punning device in naming their series--the Grove Press, for example, with its Evergreen Books and the Noonday Press with its Meridian Books.) Such series as these along with others like Mentor and Signet published by New American Library represent a serious--and, to my mind, successful--attempt by the paperback publishers themselves to discharge what the Saturday Review in a well-turned phrase once called "the responsibility for raising the general level of the paperbacks from a combination peep-show and sadist's parlor."

Perhaps, at this point, a definition of a "paperback" would be in order. This is not so simple as it seems. Confronted with the magnificent muddle of terms which adorns the writing on the subject, one is reminded of a well-known observation on the meaning of a word. "When I use a word," said Humpty-Dumpty to Alice, "it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less." "Softback," "softbound," "pocket-size book," "pocket book," "cardboard backs," "unbound books," "classics little books" (as Canada's paperback king, Louis Melzack, calls his shops in Ottawa and Montreal)--all these (and doubtless others) have been used at one time or another to describe what the trade has more recently and more uniformly come to call either the "paperback" or the "paperbound book." In the present context (and at the risk of being identified with Humpty-Dumpty) when we say "paperback" or "paperbound" we mean simply a book, either stitched or glued, either original or reprinted, with a flexible cover--laminated, lacquered, or plain.

We will not further muddy the waters by trying to frame a definition for "quality paperback"--that Johnny-come-lately of the '50's, which, somewhat erroneously, has been dubbed the "class" paperback in contrast to the "mass" paperback--a distinction which fails to take into account the presence of many "quality" titles (and indeed whole series) in the lists of the long-standing, well-established "mass" publishers like Ballantine, Bantam, Pocket Books and New American Library.

This, then, is the paperback at mid-twentieth century--a significant segment of American publishing, with 83 different series and over 5,000 titles, embracing every subject from archaeology and architecture to world affairs and westerns--titles for old and young alike, titles to read and titles to own. The one-time objections--cheap materials, objectionable covers and contents, inaccurate or inadequate indication of availability, and limited or uneven distribution--have in large measure been removed, thanks to the joint efforts of the more responsible old-line publishers and the "quality" newcomers in the field.

In short, the paperback of today is attractive physically; the paperback of today is compact, well-printed and often well-illustrated in color as well as in black-and-white; the paperback of today, even in the higher priced (and, one might add, far more durable) "quality" series, is still much less expensive than its hardbound counterpart; the paperback of today offers the newest and most up-to-date material on subjects of long standing; the paperback of today often provides the first report in print on a completely new aspect of a subject; the paperback of today is, in short, a readable, reliable and respectable addition to any bookshelf, public or private.

Because those who object to the paperback raise a good deal of hubbub about its physical aspects--whether or not it is attractive and whether or not it will wear well--this matter deserves some further attention. As regards simply the superficial matter of external appearance, the covers for the most part are colorful and bright, in contrast to the all-too-frequent somber and drab hardbound covers which remain after the dust-jacket has either been deliberately thrown away or has worn to tattered nothingness and fallen off. But more than simply in externals, the modern paperback is well-designed, well-illustrated, printed in type that is easily legible, and durably bound. No better proof of this can be found than the fact that the American Institute of Graphic Arts, in selecting their annual "50 Best " from the standpoint of typographic excellence and design, have included at least one paperback in seven out of the eleven years since 1945, and in 1955 included not one, but four. Pocket Books was represented by one 35¢ title (in 1945), I. A. Richard's The Pocket Book of Basic English. From Rinehart Editions (at 75¢ each) came four titles (in 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1955): Carlos Baker's William Wordsworth, The Prelude; Walt Whitman's Leaves

of Grass and Selected Poems; James Fenimore Cooper's The Prairie, a Tale; and Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty by J. W. DeForest. The 50¢ edition of Raoul Dufy in the Pocket Library of Great Art was one of the choices for 1953, while in that same year Doubleday's Anchor Books (85¢ each) were represented by Mark Van Doren's Shakespeare. Knopf's Vintage Books appeared on both the 1954 and 1955 lists with Alexis de Tocqueville's Democracy in America (2 vols. at 95¢ each) and Alistair Cooke's The Vintage Mencken. Harcourt Brace, with the 2-volume edition of Parrington's Main Currents in American Thought in its Harvest Books (at $1.45 each) and Simon and Schuster, with its paper-cover edition (at $1.00) of Langston Hughes' Sweet Flypaper of Life, were also represented on the AIGA's "50 Best" for 1955.

But, apart from aesthetic considerations, the paperbound books of today are superior to their predecessors in the more practical aspects of binding and stock. Many bindings, it is true, are the so-called "perfect" binding--i.e., not stitched or sewn, but held together by adhesives, which are today so strong that even some paperback publishers who have long used sewn bindings are considering adopting perfect binds instead. More durable and lasting papers, less subject to the yellowness and brittleness of aging, are taking the place of the old-time wood pulp stock of earlier days, especially in the better and more significant series. Such series, using this stronger paper, perfect bound with the stronger new adhesives (proved by tests at the National Bureau of Standards not to be inferior to comparable sewn bindings) will probably last as long as the average hardbound book, according to Schick, who treats of this along with other aspects of book production in a recent and readable article in the January 1956 issue of Library Trends.[6]

So much for the story of the paperback--how it grew and what it is today. From the foregoing, I suspect it would not require the services of tea leaves and a crystal ball to reveal what my answer to is the question posed by this paper. But that answer is conditioned, it seems to me, by what one believes to be the central purposes of the small and medium-sized public library as it operates on the American scene at mid-twentieth century. I believe that the small and medium-sized public library has several peculiar and distinct purposes in American life--some unique to itself and some for

which, along with bookseller and book publisher, it shares a common interest and a common stake. Let me state briefly these purposes as I see them:

(1) I believe the small and medium-sized public library exists to provide, from the world of print, materials selected on a quality basis adjusted to the diverse local needs and interests of its users.
(2) I believe it exists to foster the concept of books as sources of information, recreation, inspiration, and aesthetic enjoyment.
(3) I believe it exists to foster the idea that books are an integral part of a normal, well-rounded, full life in the present age.
(4) I believe it exists to encourage and stimulate the joy in the personal ownership of books both from a utilitarian and an aesthetic standpoint.
(5) I believe it exists in the main for the use rather than the preservation of books and related library materials, and therefore that considerations of use should in general take precedence over considerations of preservation.

Furthermore, I believe that these purposes are closely related to and can often best be served from the field of the paperback book. Set in this context, the paperback book is most emphatically a boon--a most welcome and effective boon--and a most economical one as well (or it is no longer true that libraries are afflicted by that well-known curse of poverty--the lack of means?).

The emergence and subsequent growth of the "quality" paperback in the early '50's provide for the librarian a virtually limitless bonanza of excellent, top-level writings in both the fiction and nonfiction fields. Whole series have appeared, devoted to specific groups of reader interests, such as Van Nostrand's Anvil Books (in the social sciences), Doubleday's Image Books (in religion) and Hill and Wang's new Dramabooks, wherein biography, criticism, and the plays themselves are joined to bring alive the stage before the reader's eyes.

Between the covers of the paperbacks, one often meets old friends in new dress--and makes new friends as well. The twentieth century library demands new interpretations of the

writings in other languages, a more colloquial and informal translation and rendition than the most classically stylized and formalized efforts of another age (witness the Revised Standard Version of the Bible as an example). The new Penguin translations, commissioned by the firm's head, Sir Allen Lane, have this ring of freshness and appeal to the present-day reader: Rieu's translation of Homer's Odyssey, Selincourt's translation of the Histories of Herodotus, Vellacott's translation of three of the plays of Euripides, Warner's translation of Thucydides' Peloponnesian Wars, and Handford's translation of the Fables of Aesop. These are, let me emphasize, completely new translations, made especially for this series. Penguin has announced for publication two more new translations, one of Vergil's Aeneid and one of Aeschylus' Oresteian trilogy. Only a short time ago, Regnery announced that Machiavelli's The Prince would appear in the paperbound Gateway Editions in a completely new translation, even to the title--The Ruler. And even the texts of classic and long-accepted English authors are subject to a new and closer look in the light of modern scholarship, and a new edition results, such as the Pelican Shakespeare, a remarkable series (Penguin's first completely American venture, by the way), wherein the individual plays are presented in fresh, attractive format, with notes on each page, sewn bindings and covers printed in two colors--and at only fifty cents each. Such editions as these, with their bright, neat, clean, modern look, are a far cry, indeed, from the dingy, dull, dog-eared hardbounds of another age which, sadly enough, continue to be the sole representation of the great heritage of the past on many a public library shelf.

This is all very well, one may say, but what of the present--with its new frontiers, its seemingly new problems and perplexities, its new discoveries? We need, cries the librarian, material that is up-to-date, that deals with matters of the moment, that is practical and meaningful, and everyday. Very well, let's look at religion. Religion is an enormously popular field--ranking third in number of titles published in the United States, led only by fiction and juveniles, year after year. And religion, as anyone knows, is fraught with controversy. The latest subject is the Dead Sea Scrolls which Time, in its usual picturesque manner, says "have already kicked up more dust in Christendom than anything since Darwin, and will certainly kick up more in years to come."

An original paperbound book on the Scrolls by J. Powell Davies has appeared in New American Library's Signet Key series; another by John M. Allegro in the Pelican series; and most recently the first complete English translation by Theodore H. Gaster appeared simultaneously in hardbound and paperbound format (the paperbound Anchor Books edition at 95¢, the hardbound at $4.00). But to return to broader aspects of religion: in addition to the already well-established Image series, two new series on religion (Meridian's Living Age Books and Harper's Torchlight Books) are making their debut this fall, to be joined early in 1957 by another series from the Association Press--all three completely new series on religion, all paperbacks and all in the best literary tradition.

The high price of books in some special fields has always plagued the librarian, confronted with the necessity of stretching every book dollar to the limit. Art is one such field, where book prices of $10.00, $25.00 and even higher occur with all too disturbing frequency. Here, as in other fields like the sciences and technology, the presence of low-cost, attractive paperbounds like the Pocket Library of Great Art is indeed a boon. Artists like Van Gogh, Gauguin and Rouault are the subjects of individual volumes in this excellent series, with magnificent color plates and evaluation of the artist's work by a leading critic. Twelve volumes in this series (at 50¢ each) representing twelve different artists and perhaps even twelve different reader interests could be obtained at far less than one would normally expect to pay for a single hardbound volume in the field.

Often, too, a paperbound is the only available edition of a book which is now out-of-print or which, because of scarcity or limited edition, is priced so high that, for all practical purposes, it lies beyond the reach of the smaller libraries. Dover Publications, a publisher of handsomely printed and beautifully illustrated paperbounds ranging from one to two dollars, currently offers an example of this--Rudolf Koch's Book of Signs, for which it is said that copies have brought $20 - $25 on the o.p. market. The price of this paperbound is $1.00.

The appearance of movies like War and Peace, Caine Mutiny, Away All Boats, Bhowani Junction or Tea and Sympathy creates an intensive, short-term demand for such titles in the public library. The purchase of several copies

of the paperbound edition (which often appears simultaneously with the release of the movie) provides a welcome number of much-needed duplicate copies--and at a very nominal cost. Likewise, for classes in long-term intensive demand such as mysteries and westerns (and there are quality mysteries and westerns, let me hasten to assure you--Agatha Christie, Georges Simenon, Dorothy Sayers, Graham Greene, Josephine Tey, Walter Van Tilburg Clark, Ross Santee and William McLeod Raine, for example), the library that selects and buys paperbacks can buy more titles, replace and substitute more frequently, shelve more books in the same space, and have a brighter, more colorful collection as well.

The generally attractive format, which characterizes many of the "mass" paperbacks (as published by Bantam, Pocket Books, New American Library, Dell, Popular Library, and others) as well as the "quality" paperbacks, constitutes in itself an easy and informal invitation to read, and hence serves to encourage and spread the notion that books are a normal and natural part of everyday living--to be owned as well as borrowed and read. This joy of ownership, this delight in books as objects of mental and physical pleasure, this ceaseless representation of the "book idea" not only inside the walls of the public library but outside as well is a responsibility of the librarian which cannot be overstressed. As he has long been accustomed to recommend reference sets, especially encyclopedias, for home purchase, so now the paperbound field offers him countless inexpensive editions of all kinds of books to recommend for home purchase--dictionaries, game books, books on beginning language study, cook and recipe books, seasonal books on gardening, "how-to" books, and so on and on. The librarian, thoroughly conversant with the paperbound field and with the aid of Bowker's Paperbound Books in Print which now appears twice a year, has literally innumerable opportunities both at the circulation desk and in social contacts in the life of the community to be helpful in the wise choice of titles in inexpensive editions useful for every member of the family, at every age level. In this connection, it should be observed that the interests of the junior age groups are particularly well-served by Scholastic's Teen Age Book Club (TAB), from whose offices at 351 Fourth Avenue, New York City, can be obtained a kit with manual, order forms and instructions as to how young people can participate in this exciting business of selecting and buying the

best of the paperbacks for their own personal libraries. Some libraries--college, university, public and school--stock and sell paperbounds as a part of their regular service. Others, like that of Southern Illinois University, handle personal orders for paperbounds from students, faculty, and (through the Extension Division) townsfolk in neighboring communities. But whether a librarian simply makes informal suggestions out of his knowledge of the paperback field, or whether he runs a Teen Age Book Club, or whether he stocks and sells paperbacks, he is striking a blow--an extra blow--for the cause of books and the whole reading habit; and this, coming from the person who, more than any other in his community, knows, respects and represents the "book idea", is very, very important, indeed.

It is well-known that all too few residents of a community are habitual library users, that perhaps 80 per cent of the population does not use the library at all--or, if at all, only very infrequently. One of the reasons for this may well be a public unawareness of the library and what it has to offer. Small, informal collections of paperbounds--bought with library funds and strategically placed throughout the community--in the factory, in assembly halls of the lodges, and in other places where people habitually meet, will take the library outside its physical self and make it more real to more people. These advertising expendables (for that is what they would be)--a few well-selected, readable titles of popular general fiction and nonfiction--could carry a tipped-in, home-printed flyer, something like "Read this while you relax at home--and return it when you've finished. For other good books, drop in and see us at the public library--we'll be glad to help you choose another." Here is another way in which a librarian can encourage the "book idea" and (selfishly) make his library a little better known in the process.

These are the larger considerations. One should hasten to add that there are many other ways, and more specific ways, in which paperbounds can be useful, effective and economical in the library. A few such follow. In the fields ridden by the ponderous anthology, for instance, such as poetry, the drama, and the short story, one hardbound anthology can be purchased for the permanent collection and, to supplement it, several additional paperbound copies of the individual playwrights or poets or short story writers whose efforts lie all but buried in the hardbound volume. Take drama, as an example:

G. B. Shaw, Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller are available at as little as 35¢ each--the Pelican Shakespeare titles at 50¢ each have already been mentioned. The opportunity for savings here is apparent, but no less important is the convenience to the reader, not to mention the fact that the hardbound copy, spared a good deal of wear and tear, will last much longer.

Paperbacks, small, light-weight and compact as they are, with their cheery, colorful covers and often excellent illustrations, are a welcome sight to hospital patients and indeed to all who, for whatever reason, are shut-ins (which reminds me, Wayne County Library reports that it uses paperbounds for the county jail--hardbounds are not allowed!).

These same factors of compactness, attractiveness, and variety of content indicate the desirability of using paperbounds for exhibit and display purposes. The very nature of their design is calculated to make the casual person stop and look--at a title which may feature beekeeping or indoor plant growing or pet hamsters or the innumerable "how-to's," from how to change your name to how to stop smoking (both exact titles of paperbacks, by the way), or state social security laws or workmen's compensation (two more exact titles)--something serious or something silly--whatever the subject, the paperbound catches the eye--and eye-catching is the business of exhibits.

This, then, is the case for the paperback in the public library: more titles for the same money, more books in the same space, more duplicates for short-term demands, wider representation of reader interests, wider availability and selection in the higher priced and o.p. fields, brighter and more attractive format.

Now, new materials mean new approaches. And for the library, paperbacks are distinctly new materials. Permeating every aspect of the treatment of paperbacks in libraries, there is an idea of "separateness" or "differentness" either expressed or implied--they are processed and cataloged differently (and for the most part, very simply); they are shelved differently; their circulation is handled and recorded differently--or at least separately. This applies particularly to the inexpensive titles and series of wide popular appeal--titles in the 25¢, 35¢ or 50¢ category. As one librarian says, "We approach paperbounds with what one might call the 'Kleenex concept.' They are something to use and discard.

This concept demands simplicity and economy in all the routines associated with paperbounds--ordering, processing, discarding."[7] The higher priced the paperback (as in the "quality" series, with prices ranging from 85¢ to $1.95), the more the cataloging, shelving and circulating routines approach those for handling hardbounds. There is, of course, understandably wide variation in these practices, but there is general agreement that at least the inexpensive paperbacks merit separate and different treatment from that accorded to hardbounds.

What do we mean by "process and catalog differently"? Well, a number of things. Some libraries simply stamp a mark of ownership (let us hope not across the fore-edge of the book; such practices led a well-known rare-book librarian once to coin the phrase "librarians as enemies of books"), paste in a book-pocket, and make no cards at all. Others stamp mark of ownership and make author card (which also serves as a shelf-list card and files in a separate catalog for paperbounds). Still others--a very few--do rather full cataloging even for the inexpensive paperback. Generally, however, either for reasons of uniqueness of content or permanency of material, the "quality" paperback, along with other significant additions to the library collection, is processed and cataloged fully.

What do we mean by "shelve differently"? Most libraries shelve the inexpensive paperbounds completely apart physically from the hardbounds in the collection--and often, in order to take full advantage of their format, shelve them with front cover rather than spine facing the user, just as in bookstores and magazine shops, on racks either specially built or supplied by the paperback publishers themselves. Needless to say, these shelves of paperbacks occupy a position of prominence on the main lines of traffic in the library. The shelving of the higher-priced paperbacks, many of which in hardbound form would be too expensive for the smaller library, is another matter and depends largely on whether the library wishes to accord them full, partial, or marginal cataloging. One needs only to remember that if economy is a factor, economy in buying must be matched by economy all along the line in handling and servicing. But perhaps here is a place where a librarian can have his cake and eat it, too. Suppose, for example, he needs to replace Goodspeed's A Life of Jesus, and the choice is to buy one hardbound copy at

$3.00 or two copies of the Harper Torchlight paperbound at $1.25 each.--Buy the two paperbound copies, put one in pam binds, catalog and shelve in the permanent collection (along with the hardbounds) and put the second copy in the paperback collection; and you have one copy to preserve, one to display, and two to circulate--and for no more than the cost of the single hardbound copy.

As with processing, cataloging, and shelving, the circulating of the inexpensive paperback calls for new, and different, and simpler methods. Many libraries record paperback circulations only numerically and often in bulk without specific charges for specific titles; many libraries by-pass the usual procedures of overdue notices and fines; some libraries use book cards and pockets (printed on cheaper stock than that used in their hardbound books). Obviously, when a higher-priced paperback has been cataloged fully, it circulates and is recorded like all other fully cataloged materials.

One may well ask, at this point, how many times does a paperbound circulate, anyway? Perhaps there is no other aspect of the library use of paperbacks where there has been so much writing and so little agreement. Southern Illinois University reports that a paperbound will circulate 28 times before wearing out;[8] Brooklyn users, apparently, give their books (along with their baseball umpires) a rougher time--the Brooklyn Public (one of the earliest and most enthusiastic users of paperbounds, incidentally) reports only 6 to 10 circulations per title.[9] An English librarian claims 25 - 30 circulations for "thousands" of titles in the detective story category.[10] Back to this country, again,--the Huntington Public Library's figure of 9.6 circulations per title is widely cited.[11] The extremes advanced by libraries on this point range all the way from as few as 4 to as high as 40 circulations per title before discarding. One is safe in concluding, conservatively, that the average inexpensive popular paperback will circulate at least 10 times under normal circumstances. As for the "quality" paperback, Schick's observation that, with its sturdier bindings and better paper, it will probably circulate and last as long as a comparable hardbound book has already been noted. When one gauges the cost of a single circulation of either an inexpensive or a higher-priced paperback against the purchase price, it is easy to see that in both instances it will fall far below the generally accepted ALA figure of 25 cents--granted, of

course, that a librarian observes a modicum of common sense in keeping routines and records at a minimum.

Perhaps the thorniest problem confronting librarians is how to order paperbacks. The perplexity and confusion on this point arises, I suspect, from the fact that up to relatively recently, the paperback industry has identified itself more closely with magazines than with books. This has resulted in distribution through "mass market" outlets--newsstands, magazine shelves in drugstores, super markets, etc., rather than through the jobber--bookdealer channels more familiar to librarians.

In an effort to remove some of the uncertainty and doubt about this point, I approached 28 of the best-known publishers directly with a request for information on minimum orders and discount schedules for libraries. Of the 24 which replied, 22 were willing to supply direct to libraries at discounts ranging from 10 to 40 per cent, regardless of number of titles ordered. Several "preferred" that libraries order no less than 5 titles at one time. The discount most frequently offered was 20 to 25 per cent. Only one publisher stated that he gave no discount. Several indicated a sliding scale--the more titles ordered, the greater the discount.

Coincident with the rise in quality of the format and content of paperbacks comes an increase in availability to libraries through normal book channels. The publishers of Harvest Books and Vintage Books, for instance, both replied that their series were available through wholesalers and that they preferred that library orders go to those wholesalers rather than direct. Outlets like the newly opened Paper Editions Corporation in St. Louis, the Book Mail Service in Jamaica, New York, and wholesalers like A.C. McClurg's in Chicago, offer to supply at least the "quality" paperbacks to libraries at discount. No word on availability of paperbounds in the Middle West would be complete without a mention of Kroch's and Brentano's Bookstore in Chicago, which stocks more than 5,000 separate titles (both i.p. and o.p.) of all the leading paperback publishers and will sell direct to libraries but at retail prices, of course.

Let's close with a brief look into the future. The librarian may expect to find more and more original titles in paperbacks, along with the appearance of new titles simultaneously in hardcover and paperback (like the Doubleday translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls, already mentioned). He may expect to

witness the entry of more and more old-line publishers into the paperbound field with reprints of significant books of the past, either from their own back lists or from the whole wide field of print, in series like Compass Books (from Viking), like Ann Arbor Books (from the University of Michigan Press), and like the two new series (as yet unnamed) from the University of California and Cornell presses. And these series, whether reprints or originals, will be better bound, better printed, and more durable. Not only will they be better produced; they will be better distributed--through bookstore, jobber, and wholesaler. Their titles will carry a wide appeal to readers of every age and taste. Books like Riesman's The Lonely Crowd and Boas' Primitive Art, like Virginia Woolf's The Common Reader and Gaer's How the Great Religions Began will be joined, as in December of this year, by such titles as Saint-Exupéry's Night-Flight (New American Library Signet), Steinbeck's The Pearl (Bantam), Verne's Around the World in 80 Days (Avon), Ross' The Great Religions by Which Men Live (Premier), Basso's The View From Pompey's Head (Pocket Books Cardinal), and for those who want the lighter touch, The Second Ribald Reader (a Dell original), and Crazy Cartoons by the inimitable Virgil Partch (a Crest original), as announced in Publishers' Weekly for October 15, 1956, in its monthly "Forecast of Paperbacks."

One might venture a prophecy at this point as to the nature of the library collection of the small and medium-sized public library some twenty-five years hence. It would not be inconceivable, if present trends in paperback publishing continue (along with continued increases in what is already a phenomenally high cost of hardbound books of no more than passing interest) to visualize the adult general circulating collection of tomorrow's libraries in this group as consisting of 90 per cent paperbound books and 10 per cent hardbound books. After all, the main aim of these libraries is the use, not the preservation, of books. This concept envisages, then, a fluid, flexible, changing collection in place of the present (and all too generally accepted) firm, fixed, ever-growing collection. The classics of yesterday and today and tomorrow remain, of course, essentially a matter for the hardbounds; the books that reflect the changeability, the myriad interests (and indeed the uncertainty) of a passing present and an undetermined future may well be considered a matter for the paper-

backs. Remember, I am speaking now of the adult general circulating collection only--not of reference books, not of children's books, and not of special subject collections. The deliberate impermanence of paperbacks in the fields of westerns and mysteries has long been acknowledged. The relative permanence of the more substantial series in other fields is now an accepted fact. As one witnesses the emergence of more and more paperback titles and series in both of these widely different areas, it is entirely feasible to suggest that tomorrow's public will be best served at the adult general interest level by a collection that is in the main paperbound--best served both from the standpoint of economy and of effectiveness.

Tomorrow's librarian may resemble (Heaven forbid) the absurdly overstated caricature which the press, radio, television and (most recently the movies have thrust into the forefront of public consciousness. At all events, tomorrow's librarian is likely to be simply and genuinely possessed by what Lyman Bryson, in the November 1956 issue of House Beautiful, calls a "clinical solicitude"--I am not sure he means this as a compliment, though I think we should take it as such--a "clinical solicitude for the tastes and demands of the book-borrowing public." And part and parcel of this "clinical solicitude" is the knowledge of paperbacks--their value to libraries both public and private, their enormous range of reader interests, their attractiveness, and their economy. Tomorrow's librarian confronted with this "magic key to a satisfied mind" (to use Brentano's happy phrase) may well be asked one day, like the mythical publisher with whom this paper opened, "Are you hardbound--or paperbound?" And if he cannot unhesitatingly answer, "Both," then perhaps, after all, he is merely hidebound.

References

1. J.D. Hart, The Popular Book (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 153 f.

2. Kurt Enoch, "The Paperbound Book; Twentieth Century Publishing Phenomenon," Library Quarterly, XXIV (July, 1954), 213.

3. Publishers' Weekly, CLXIX (Jan. 21, 1956), 214.

4. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Advance Report 1954 Census of Manufacturers: Books, Publishing and Printing, Industry. Series MC-27-1.1 (Washington: The Bureau, Sept., 1956).

5. Manchester Guardian, June 23, 1956.

6. Frank L. Schick, "Trends in Publications Affecting Binding and Conservation," Library Trends, IV (Jan., 1956), 229 f.

7. "Public Library Use of Paperbound Books," PLD Reporter, No. 1 (Sept., 1954), 44.

8. Elizabeth O. Stone and Mary B. Melvin, "Paperbounds Go to College," Library Journal, LXXX (Aug., 1955), 1647.

9. "Paperbacks in the Public Library; A New Set of Handling Problems," Publishers' Weekly, CLXVIII (Dec. 17, 1955), 2432.

10. W.B. Stevenson, "More about Penguins," The Librarian and Book World, XLIV (May, 1955), 89.

11. Schick, op. cit., p. 229.

For Further Reading

Carruth, Hayden. "The Phenomenon of the Paperback," Perspectives USA, No. 15 (Spring, 1956), 192-204.

Gelderbloom, Gertrude. "Paperbound Books and Public Libraries," UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries, X (Feb.-March, 1956), 55-59.

Lewis, Freeman. Paperbound Books in America. "R.R. Bowker Memorial Lectures," No. 16. New York: New York Public Library, 1952.

Walbridge, Earle F. "A New Look at Paperbacks," Library Journal, LXXXI (July, 1956), 1688-93+.

Good Reading (Committee on College Reading). Rev. ed. New York, New American Library, 1956. (NAL Mentor).

Itself a paperback, priced at fifty cents, this is an extremely valuable and practical selection aid for both hardbounds and paperbounds old and new. Provides an up-to-date and usable "checklist of paperbound editions" (pp. 224-66) arranged by subject, and addresses of leading reprint publishers, both paperbound and hardbound (pp. 21-22). No library should be without this, but be sure to get the latest edition, for it is revised very frequently.

Catalog of Reprints in Series (Robert M. Orton) 16th ed. New York, H. W. Wilson, 1955.

This is an outstanding aid for reprint selection--in both hardbound and paperbound form. Part II ("Publishers and Series") is especially good for showing the nature and contents of the better-known paperback series, grouping titles under each series. Not complete in coverage (for example, the Penguin list is very inadequate), but good. Excludes (as title indicates) the rapidly growing group of originals in paperbacks.

Paperbound Books in Print. New York, R.R. Bowker.

Published twice a year, ($2.00 for single issue, $3.00 yearly), this provides the most complete and up-to-date information anywhere available on publishers' series and addresses, together with separate author, title, and subject indexes for over 5,000 paperbacks, both originals and reprints. Not so good as Orton, however, for showing the contents of individual series.

Also special sections in the following periodicals:

Changing Times, The Kiplinger Magazine. Ten to 15 titles are listed every other month in a "brief random listing of non-fiction paperbacks, publicized here because they get little attention elsewhere." Especially good for reference and "how-to" books.

Publishers' Weekly. Its "Forecast of Paperbacks" is the only regularly appearing advance listing of new paperbacks. This is a regular feature in the third issue of each month and provides detailed information with annotations on paperbacks scheduled for publication two months later.

Saturday Review. While SR carries no regular section dealing with paperbacks, from time to time it publishes special lists like "The Pick of the Paperbacks" (Aug. 13, 1955). These lists give series, publisher, price, and are annotated. "New Editions," a regular feature, also lists paperbacks occasionally.

Note: The list of paperback titles which follows provides a convenient sampling of the contents and emphasis of 30 series most likely to prove useful for small and medium-sized public libraries. This list is selected from books which were submitted by publishers as representative of their series for exhibit at the Institute.

Recent and Representative Paperback Titles

AMERICAN HERITAGE SERIES (Liberal Arts)

Jefferson: Political Writings (selected) (.90)

ANCHOR BOOKS (Doubleday)

Bentley: The Modern Theatre; 5 Plays (.95)
Sypher: Four Stages of Renaissance Style (1.25)

BALLANTINE BOOKS (Ballantine)

Giles: Kansas Trail (.35)
Grombach: Olympic Cavalcade of Sports (.35)
Lasly: Turn the Tigers Loose (.35)
Kelly: The Wright Brothers (.35)
Mead: The Bright Phoenix (.35)
Tute: The Cruiser (.50)
Vance: To Live Forever (.35)
Vidal: Best Television Plays (.35)

BEACON PAPERBACKS (Beacon)

Mayorga: The Best Short Plays of 1955-56 (1.25)

COMPASS BOOKS (Viking)

Joyce: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (.95)

DELL FIRST EDITIONS (Dell)

Gasser: How to Draw and Paint (.50)
Haber: Walt Disney Story of Our Friend the Atom (.35)
Hunter: Modern French Painting (.50)
The Ribald Reader (.50)
Six Great Modern Plays (.50)
Six Great Modern Short Novels (.50)

DOVER BOOKS (Dover)

Boas: Primitive Art (1.95)
Bragg: Concerning the Nature of Things (1.25)
Joad: Guide to Philosophy (1.95)
Klein: Famous Problems of Elementary Geometry (1.00)
Schlauch: The Gift of Language (1.75)
Taylor: Aristotle (1.00)

DRAMABOOKS and MERMAID DRAMABOOKS (Hill & Wang)

Chesterton: George Bernard Shaw (.95)
Fluchère: Shakespeare and the Elizabethans (1.25)
Granville-Barker: On Dramatic Method (.95)
Congreve: Complete Plays, ed. by Eric Bentley (1.45)
Marlowe: Five Plays, ed. by Eric Bentley (1.35)
Webster and Tourneur: Four Plays, ed. by Eric Bentley (1.35)

EVERGREEN BOOKS (Grove)

Norris: The Pit (1.75)

GALAXY BOOKS (Oxford)

Homer: Odyssey, trans. by Shaw (1.50)
Mills: White Collar (1.75)

GATEWAY EDITIONS (Regnery)

Bogen: Achievement in American Poetry (1.25)
Hearn: Tales and Essays from Old Japan (1.25)
Unamuno: Abel Sanchez and Other Stories (1.25)

HARVEST BOOKS (Harcourt, Brace)

Eliot: Essays on Elizabethan Drama (.95)
Wellek: Theory of Literature (1.65)

IMAGE BOOKS (Doubleday)

Burton: Sorrow Built a Bridge (.75)
Talbot: Saint among the Hurons (.95)

LIBRARY OF LIBERAL ARTS (Liberal Arts)

Plato: Protagoras, trans. by Jowett (.75)

LION LIBRARY EDITIONS and LION BOOKS
(Atlas Magazines)

Great Tales of City Dwellers (.35)
Great Tales of the Far West (.35)
Greene: Nineteen Stories (.35)
Halecki and Murray: Pius XII; Pope of Peace (.50)
March: Company K (.25)
Parents' Magazine Book of Baby Care (.35)
Verne: Around the World in 80 Days (.35)

MENTOR (New American Library)

Downs: Books That Changed the World (.35)
Fremantle: The Papal Encyclicals (.50)
Good Reading (.50)
Lippmann: The Public Philosophy (.35)

The Mentor Philosophers
Berlin: The Age of Enlightenment (.50)
White: The Age of Analysis (.50)
The Reader's Companion to World Literature (.50)
Tunnard: American Skyline (.50)

MERIDIAN BOOKS (Noonday)

Fry: Vision and Design (1.35)
Stern: The Varieties of History... (1.45)

NEW DIRECTIONS PAPERBOOKS (New Directions)

Fitzgerald: The Crack Up (1.45)
Thomas: Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog (.95)
Williams: In the American Grain (1.25)

PELICAN BOOKS (Penguin)

Allegro: The Dead Sea Scrolls (.85)

PENGUIN BOOKS (Penguin)

Chaucer: Canterbury Tales (1.25)
Shaw: Saint Joan (.50)

PHOENIX BOOKS (University of Chicago)

Chiera: They Wrote on Clay (1.00)
Wirth: The Ghetto (1.25)

PUFFIN STORY BOOKS (Penguin)

Green: King Arthur and His Knights... (.65)
Green: Robin Hood (.65)

PYRAMID BOOKS (Pyramid Books)

Balzac: Père Goriot (.35)
The Compact Bible (.95)
Daniels: It's Never Too Late to Love (.35)
Jackson: The Other Side of the Street (.35)
London: The Seed of McCoy and Other Stories (.35)

Loomis: Wild Country (.35)
Merrill: Women and Vodka (Russian Short Stories) (.35)

RINEHART EDITIONS (Rinehart)

De Forest: Miss Ravenel's Conversion (1.45)
Spenser: Selected Poetry (price not given)

SIGNET (New American Library)

Anderson: Tea and Sympathy (.25)
Coon: How to Be a Better Member (.35)
Davies: The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls (.35)
Markandaya: Nectar in a Sieve (.35)
Orwell: 1984 (.35)
Rossiter: The American Presidency (.35)
Warren: Band of Angels (.50)

TORCHLIGHT BOOKS (Harper)

Enslin: Christian Beginnings, Parts I and II (1.25)
Enslin: The Literature of the Christian Movement (1.50)
Fosdick: A Guide to Understanding the Bible (1.75)
Goodspeed: A Life of Jesus (1.25)
Kirkegaard: Purity of Heart (1.25)
Niebuhr: Christ and Culture (1.25)

VIKING PAPERBOUND PORTABLES (Viking)

Haydn: The Portable Elizabethan Reader (1.25)
Saunders: The Portable Gibbon (1.25)

VINTAGE BOOKS (Knopf)

Gide: The Immoralist (.95)
Highet: The Art of Teaching (.95)

A Selected List of Paperback Publishers and Series

Note: * indicates publishers who supplied sample representative titles for exhibit at the Institute, along with information on discounts.

*Atlas Magazines, Inc.
LION BOOKS
LION LIBRARY EDITIONS
655 Madison Avenue
New York 21, New York

Avon Publishing Co.
AVON BOOKS
575 Madison Avenue
New York 22, New York

*Ballantine Books, Inc.
BALLANTINE BOOKS
101 Fifth Avenue
New York 18, New York

Bantam Books, Inc.
BANTAM BOOKS
25 West 45th Street
New York 36, New York

*Beacon Press, Inc.
BEACON PAPERBACKS
25 Beacon Street
Boston 8, Massachusetts

*Dell Publishing Co., Inc.
DELL BOOKS
DELL FIRST EDITIONS
261 Fifth Avenue
New York 16, New York

*Doubleday & Co., Inc.
ANCHOR BOOKS
IMAGE BOOKS
Garden City, New York

*Dover Publications, Inc.
DOVER BOOKS
920 Broadway
New York 10, New York

Grosset and Dunlap, Inc.
UNIVERSAL LIBRARY
1107 Broadway
New York 10, New York

*Grove Press
EVERGREEN BOOKS
795 Broadway
New York 3, New York

*Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc.
HARVEST BOOKS
383 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

*Harper & Bros.
TORCHLIGHT BOOKS
49 East 33rd Street
New York 16, New York

*Hill and Wang, Inc.
DRAMABOOKS
MERMAID DRAMABOOKS
104 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, New York

*Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
VINTAGE BOOKS
501 Madison Avenue
New York 22, New York

*Liberal Arts Press, Inc.
AM. HERITAGE SERIES
LIBR. OF LIBERAL ARTS
LIBR. OF RELIGION
153 West 72nd Street
New York 23, New York

*New American Library of
World Literature, Inc.
MENTOR BOOKS
SIGNET BOOKS
501 Madison Avenue
New York 22, New York

*New Directions
N. D. PAPERBOOKS
Norfolk, Connecticut

*Noonday Press
LIVING AGE BOOKS
MERIDIAN BOOKS
17 Union Square
New York 3, New York

*Oxford University Press, Inc.
GALAXY BOOKS
114 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, New York

*Penguin Books, Inc.
PELICAN BOOKS
PENGUIN BOOKS
PUFFIN STORY BOOKS
3300 Clipper Mill Road
Baltimore 11, Maryland

Pocket Books, Inc.
PERMABOOKS
POCKET BOOKS
630 Fifth Avenue
New York 20, New York

Popular Library, Inc.
POPULAR LIBRARY
10 East 40th Street
New York 16, New York

*Pyramid Books
PYRAMID BOOKS
444 Madison Avenue
New York 22, New York

Random House, Inc.
MOD. LIBR. COLL. EDS.
MOD. LIBR. PAPERBACKS
457 Madison Avenue
New York 22, New York

*Henry Regnery Co.
GATEWAY EDITIONS
20 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago 4, Illinois

*Rinehart & Co., Inc.
RINEHART EDITIONS
232 Madison Avenue
New York 16, New York

*University of Chicago Press
PHOENIX BOOKS
5750 Ellis Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

*Viking Press, Inc.
COMPASS BOOKS
V. PABD. PORTABLES
625 Madison Avenue
New York 22, New York

Note: Practice on payment of postal charges will vary with the publisher.